



The Family Spirit Program: Promoting Maternal and Child Health through Early Childhood Home Visiting



Tribal Maternal and
Child Health Symposium
November 26, 2018

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Presentation Overview



- Background on Johns Hopkins Center for American Indian Health
- History of Family Spirit Model
- Impact of Family Spirit
- Curriculum Overview
- Replication Process
- New Directions for Family Spirit
 - Precision Home Visiting
 - Family Spirit *Nurture*



Johns Hopkins Center for American Indian Health at the Bloomberg School of Public Health

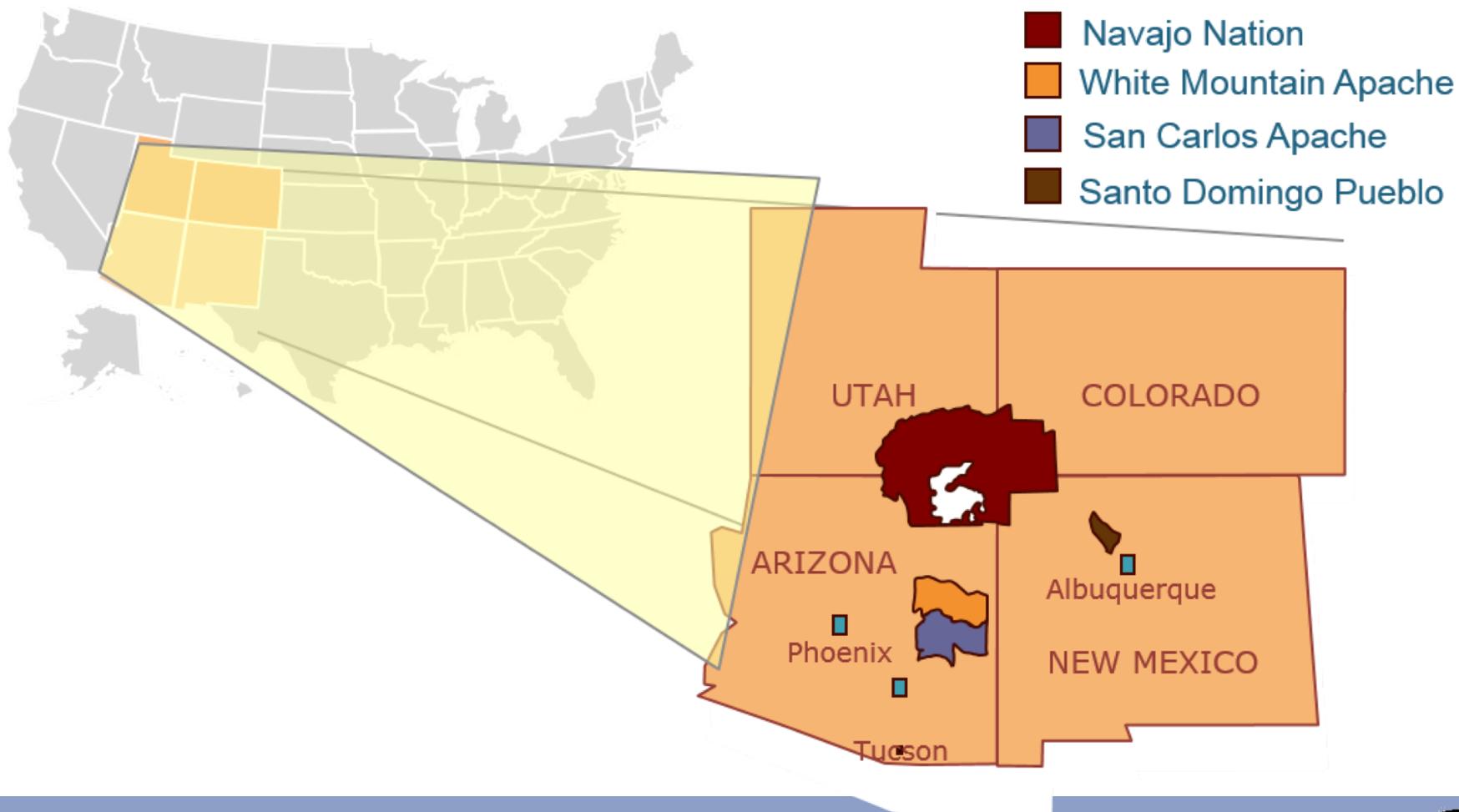


For more than three decades we have partnered with American Indian communities to co-design programs to achieve optimal health and well-being across the lifespan.

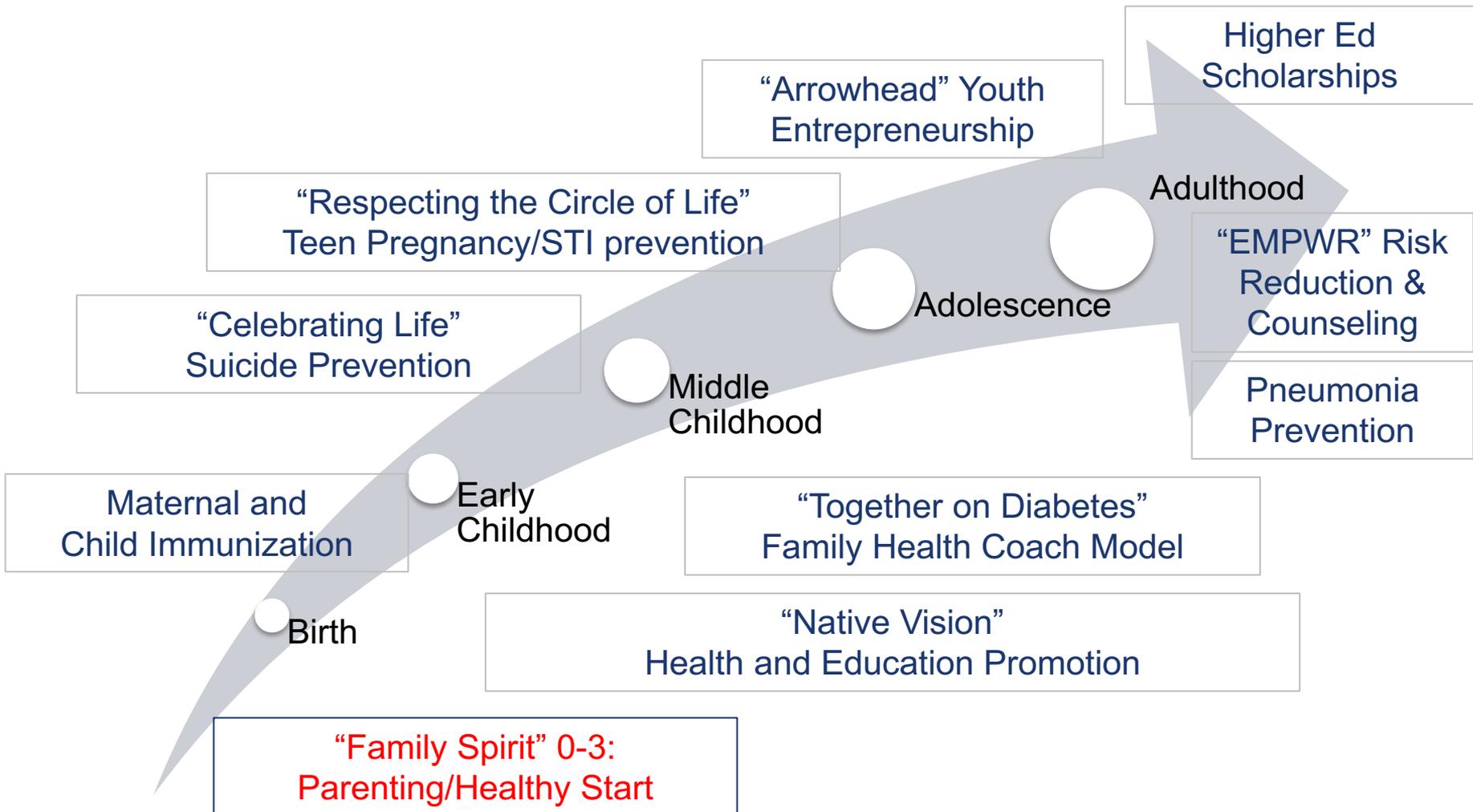
MOU with Indian Health Service since 1991.



35+ Years of Health Innovations with Southwestern Tribal Partners



Changing the Future: Working Across the Lifespan



Family Spirit Intervention



Home-Based Outreach



Family Involvement



Structured, home-based curriculum taught by AI Home Visitors to young mothers from pregnancy – 36 mos post-partum



Community Referrals

Family Spirit Program History

SOS Project:

- * service
- * teen Moms, babies
- * prenatal-6 months post partum
(160 Moms served)

1998-1999

1995

Fathers Project:

- * service
- * curriculum to address needs of young Dads
(55 Dads; 62 Moms served)

Family Strengthening:

- * teen Moms/Dads
- * prenatal to baby's 6 month birthday
- * RCT evaluation Moms/Dads
(48 Dads/68 Moms served)

1999-2001

Family Spirit:

- * teen Moms/Dads
- * prenatal to baby's 12 month birthday
- * RCT evaluation Moms/Dads
(75 Dads/166 Moms served)

2002-2005

Cradling Our Future:

- * teen Moms
- * 28 weeks gestation-baby's 3rd birthday
- * RCT evaluation Moms
(322 Moms/kids enrolled)

2005

Return to Service:

- Program Replication**
- * Replication sites all over the country
- * Trainings scheduled throughout the year

2006-Present

Family Spirit Impact – Pregnancy to Age 3 (Postpartum)



PARENTING

- Increased maternal knowledge^{1,2,3,4}
- Increased parent self-efficacy^{3,4}
- Reduced parent stress^{2,4}
- Improved home safety attitudes³

MATERNAL OUTCOMES

- Decreased maternal depression.^{1,2,4}
- Decreased substance use⁴
- Fewer behavior problems in mothers.^{3,4}

CHILD OUTCOMES

- Fewer behavior problems in children through age 3.^{2, 3, 4}
(Externalizing, Internalizing and Dysregulation)
 - ✓ Predicts lower risk of substance use and behavior health problems over life course



1 Barlow A, Varipatis-Baker E, Speakman K, et al *Arch Pediatr Adolesc Med.* 2006;160:1101-1107

2 Walkup J, Barlow A, Mullany B, et al. *Journal of the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry.* June 2009.

3 Barlow A, Mullany B, Neault N, et al. *American Journal of Psychiatry.* January 2013.

4 Barlow A., Mullany B., Neault N, et al – *American Journal of Psychiatry,* October 2014.



Family Spirit Curriculum: Key Content



- ✓ Goal-Setting
- ✓ Parenting and Well-Child Care
- ✓ Reproductive Health
- ✓ Nutrition/Responsive Feeding
- ✓ Establishing Meal Time/Sleep Routines
- ✓ Oral Health
- ✓ Family Planning
- ✓ Substance Abuse & Depression Prevention/Referral
- ✓ Conflict and Problem-Solving
- ✓ School/Career Planning
- ✓ Budgeting for One's Family
- ✓ Preparing Young Children for School

Curriculum Overview



Tapping Cultural Assets



- Children are sacred
- Matrilineal societies



- Changing woman
- Sunrise Ceremony, Kinaalda

Culturally Grounded Content and Format



- “Familiar” stories create dialogue between Family Health Educator and mom to solve problems.
- Illustrations by Apache-Navajo artist.
- Out-takes for local cultural activities and additional resources



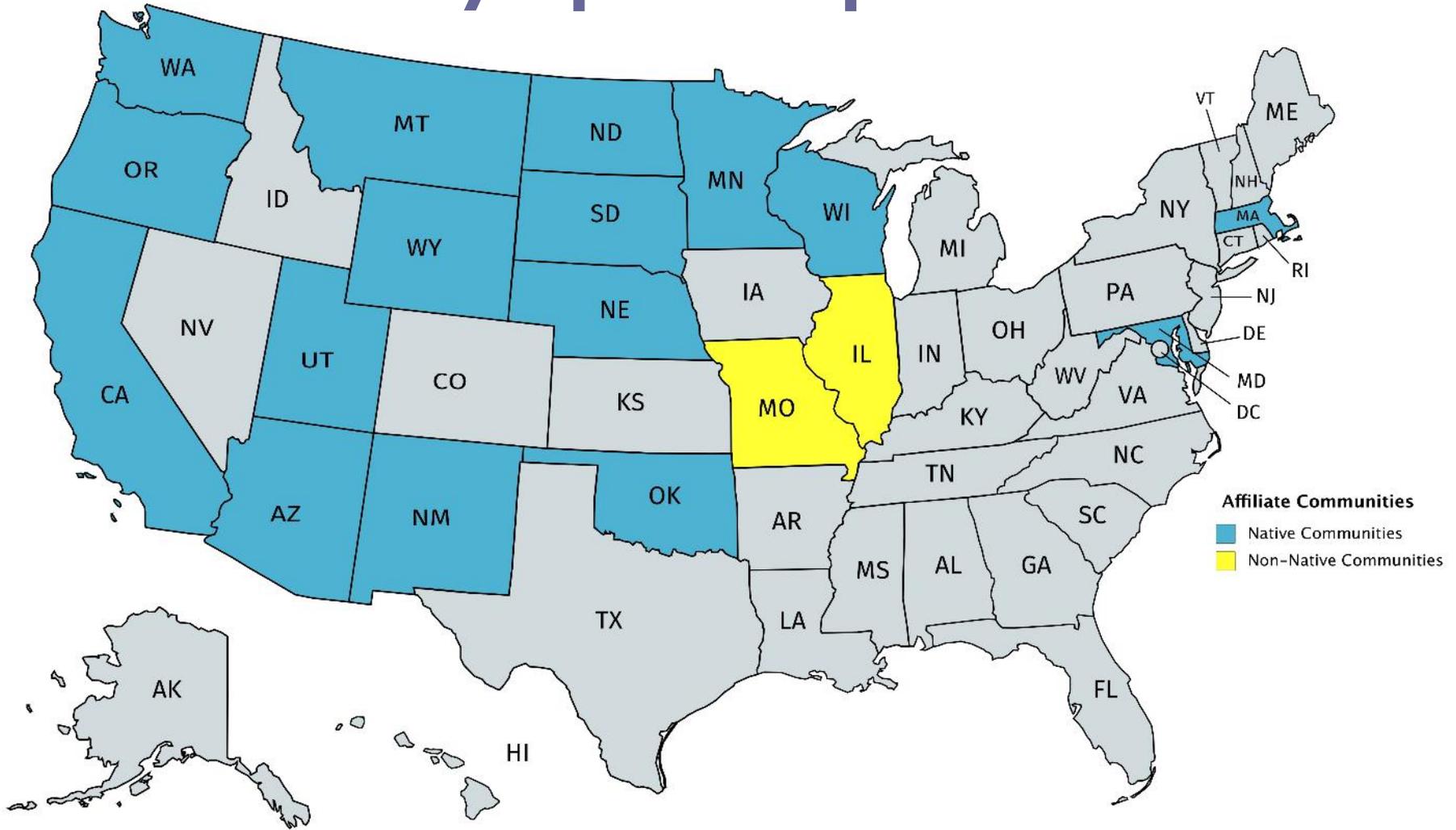
Culturally Grounded Content and Format



- Traditional parenting/nurturing practices
- Cultural teachings/worldviews
- Family structure – elder caregivers, extended family
- American Indian life skills development
- Lesson Modules – illustrative designs, scenarios, activities
- Community resources - tribal programs, IHS



Family Spirit Replication



Replication Process

PLANNING

- Introductory Webinar
- Readiness/Evaluation Tools
- Online Knowledge Assessments
- Pre-Training Calls

TRAINING

- Rigorous week-long training
- Focus on curriculum content/delivery
- Evaluation Training
- FS Certification

IMPLEMENTATION

- Post-Training Calls
- Quarterly Affiliate Reports
- FS Connect Opportunities



Child Welfare in
New Directions
for Family Spirit



Precision Approach to Home Visiting – Project Aims

1. Identify “Active Ingredients” of Family Spirit
 - What lessons should every mother get?
 - What else leads to better retention and engagement?
2. Leverage technology to measure impact of “Active Ingredients”
 - Partnering with Care4 implementation support platform
3. Pilot study comparing precision approach to standard Family Spirit

Family Spirit *Nurture*: Addressing Early Childhood Obesity



- **Enhancing Family Spirit to focus on exploring/promoting...**
 - How and what mothers feed their infants/toddlers
 - Child diet and physical activity
 - Child weight status
 - Maternal psychosocial and household environment factors
 - Biologic measures tied to obesity risks
- **Randomized Controlled Trial**
 - 338 Pregnant American Indian women (<32 wks gestation) living in or near Shiprock, NM (Navajo), Fort Defiance, AZ/Gallup, NM (Navajo) or Whiteriver, AZ (White Mountain Apache).
- **Study Components**
 - Home-based lessons delivered by a Family Health Coach 28 wks gestation - 18 months pp
 - Intervention: 36 Obesity Prevention Lessons (Family Spirit Nurture)
 - Control: 8 Injury Prevention Education Lessons
 - Rigorous evaluation





THANK YOU



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Family Spirit Video: Crystal and Charmayne



- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6e0swZ-e5f8>

